

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

There are now pending in this application claims 1, 3-7, 10, 13 and 14, of which claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 13 and 14 are independent. Claims 8, 9, 11 and 12 have been canceled without prejudice or waiver of their subject matter. No claims have been added.

Claims 10, 13 and 14 were objected to on grounds that the recited "so as to store a sheet in synchronism with display control of said display control means" is technically inaccurate. As the Examiner will appreciate, Applicant has rewritten the respective control means and control step clauses in claims 10, 13 and 14 to eliminate this phraseology. It is respectfully submitted that the cited informality has been addressed and overcome.

Independent claims 1, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kida in view of Kawamura et al. Independent claims 10, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kida. In view of the above amendments, and the following remarks, the rejections are respectfully traversed.

The invention as featured in independent claim 1 is directed to an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage units and has at least two operation modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode. In accordance with the invention, there is a determination means for determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continuous for a predetermined time. When this is the case, it automatically sets the apparatus to a

predetermined operation from among the plurality of operation modes and controls, in response to the order-clear operation setting means setting the predetermined operation mode, the sheet processing apparatus so as to enable a sheet storage unit which is assigned to the predetermined operation, to store a sheet. This is done even if not receiving job data for the predetermined operation mode. Thus, when receiving a job data for a predetermined operation mode after the predetermined operation mode is set by the auto-clear operation means, the apparatus can quickly perform image forming on a sheet and output the formed sheet to the sheet processing apparatus because the sheet storage unit corresponding to the predetermined operation mode has been in a ready state to store the sheet.

Claims 6 and 7 are directed to a method and computer readable storage medium. These claims incorporate the same salient features as claim 1.

Kida provides a plurality of sheet storage units and discloses assigning sheet storage units for each of a copy mode, a facsimile mode, and a printer mode. However, in Kida the switching among the plurality of sheet storage units is made after receiving a job rather than before receiving a job.

Kawamura et al. features cancelling the mode for setting the parameters if no-operation for setting parameters for a print mode is inputted for a predetermined time.

Kawamura et al. was identified by the Examiner as disclosing the auto-clear means and method as recited in the above claims, specifically at column 6, line 1-15. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Kawamura et al. merely discloses cancelling the mode for setting sheet size. That is, the mode being referred to in Kawamura et al. is substantially different from the mode upon

which the present invention is based. Moreover, Kawamura et al. is not understood to teach or suggest a control means for a control step as recited in claims 1, 6 and 7.

The invention as set forth in independent claim 10 is directed to an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage units, and having at least two operation modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode. The invention is featured in that windows are displayed corresponding to the operation modes on a display device independently for the respective operation modes, and a sheet storage unit which is assigned to the switched operation mode is controlled so as to store a sheet even if not receiving job data from the displayed operation mode. This combination of features makes it possible to perform image forming for the operation mode quickly.

Claims 13 and 14 are directed respectively to method and computer medium claims and incorporate the salient features of claim 10.

Kida features switching among operation modes in response to the operation of a key 26. According to Kida, switching among sheet storage units is made for the first time when the recorded sheet is fed out. Thus, Kida fails to teach or even suggest controlling a sheet storage unit which is assigned to the switched operation mode when a display window corresponding to any one of the plurality of operation modes is displayed on the display device, so as to store a sheet even if not receiving job data for displayed operation mode. As such, it is respectfully submitted that each of claims 10, 13 and 14 is patentable over the applied reference.

The remaining claims in the above application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from one of the above-discussed independent claims and are therefore

patentable over the art of record for the reasons noted above with respect to the independent claims. In addition, each recites features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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